“Beating the Blues”

Marine Corps Bases Japan
&
III MEF

MCCS MARINE CORPS Community Services Okinawa

Background

- Annual holiday time-frame event since November 1999.
- Produced by MCCS Marine and Family Services.
- Purpose is to convey vital behavioral health programming information in an entertaining, upbeat format. Also MCCS holiday activity information.
- Originally addressed safety, suicide and substance abuse. Added combat operational stress control (2004) and sexual assault (2009).

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Background (con't)

- Shows are presented in Marine Corps Base theaters throughout Okinawa between mid-November and Thanksgiving.
- Program length: 90 minutes.
- Use of SME presenters, video clips, prizes (this year includes 2 round-trip airplane tickets to U.S. courtesy of UA); upbeat, serious, and positive.
- 21 shows total in 2009; presented over 9 days.
- 8,000-10,000 Marines and Sailors attend.

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Concept

- Mandatory annual training/attendance.
- Recognizes that Holidays can be a time of loneliness for many who are separated from family and friends, especially for the first time.
- Attempts to alert Marines to danger signs for high risk behaviors.
- Provides information for on-base community resources available to assist them in time of crisis; includes Military One Source.

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Concept (con't)

- Honors the service and character of Marines and Sailors.
- Calls on them to care for one another.
- Challenges them to invoke the battle field ethos: never leave a wounded Marine behind.
- Challenges them to get involved, provide assistance, and seek help for themselves or others as needed.

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